



Founded in 1899

# ALUMNI NEWS

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Education for Time and Eternity

A newsletter for alumni of Oneida Baptist Institute

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## Martha Bowling Coldiron Hogg donated land to build a school

**Martha Bowling Coldiron Hogg** answered “yes” when **James Anderson Burns** asked her for ten acres of her land to build a school in 1899. Was it a generous heart or her head for business that prompted her to give Burns ten acres of a farm that she had recently purchased? Undoubtedly, Burns had shared with Martha his vision of bringing an end to the feud by building a school to educate the children in the area. He had told her how he and his friend, **H.L. McMurray**, had gone to the top of a hill overlooking a beautiful valley, climbed a large oak tree, looked down and saw a knoll next to a valley of cleared land and had recounted how both he and McMurray had known instantly that this was the perfect site for their school. The valley was surrounded on three sides by Goose Creek, Red Bird River and Bull Skin Creek, but the knoll was high enough to be above flood waters.

How did Martha Coldiron Hogg acquire a farm in the late 1800’s when it was almost unheard of for women to own property? Martha’s first husband, **Calvin Coldiron**, owned and operated a hotel in Manchester. The Coldirons had two sons, **Jim** and **Hampton Grant (H.G.)**, and one daughter, **Katherine**. Calvin died in 1892, leaving Martha the hotel. According to law, if a woman inherited property and didn’t have a husband she had to have a guardian.

Martha solved that dilemma in 1895 when she married an attorney, **Stephen Polly Hogg**, from Booneville, with a premarital contract allowing her to control her property. Martha sold the Manchester hotel to **J.A. Webb** in



1896 and bought the **Lewis A. Howard** farm in Oneida. Mr. Hogg continued to live in Booneville and Martha lived in Oneida as Martha Coldiron Hogg. At that time, the village of Oneida consisted of a hewed-log house, two small cottages and a combined country store/post office. In September 1899, Martha deeded ten acres of her land to the Mamre Baptist College. James A. Burns, with the help of men from both sides of the feud, completed the first school building in December 1899; the school opened its doors on January 1, 1900 to over 100 students -- boys, girls, men, and women. The name of the school was changed to Oneida Baptist Institute by the Board of Trustees on October 29, 1904.

Soon after the school opened, Martha planned the village of Oneida -- three blocks long and three blocks wide. She began selling house lots to families who lived on Redbird, Bullskin, and surrounding branches who wanted to move to Oneida so their children could go to school. By the end of the first year six new homes had been built. In 1909, the Clay County tax records showed that there were 25

property owners in Oneida.

The only daughter of Calvin and Martha Coldiron, **Katherine (Kate)**, married **John Henry Walker**, who served OBI over 20 years as teacher, principal, dean and vice-president. The Walkers’ daughter, **Kathleen**, graduated from OBI in 1930.

Martha’s son, **Hampton Grant (H.G.) Coldiron** married **Martha Howard** from Harlan County. Their daughter, **Rose**, married **R.H. Bowman**. The Bowmans had five children; one daughter, **Martha**, was named for her great-grandmother, Martha Coldiron Hogg and her grandmother, Martha Howard Coldiron. This third generation Martha is **Martha Bowman Adams Houchell**, a graduate of Oneida Baptist Institute, class of 1956.

Two daughters of H.G. and Martha Howard Coldiron, **Maggie** and **Mae**, married brothers, **Charlie** and **Simon Garrison**, respectively. A grandson of Mae Coldiron Garrison and great-great grandson of Martha Coldiron Hogg, **Vince Garrison**, graduated from OBI in 1968.

Other descendants of Martha Hogg who attended Oneida Baptist Institute and are still living include **Lucy Katherine Garrison Hensley** and **John Garrison**.

Martha Bowling Coldiron Hogg died July 28, 1915. She is buried on Cemetery Hill overlooking the Oneida campus--the land that she once owned but donated to a school that has provided and continues to provide a quality Christian education to thousands of students. What a legacy from a woman who without a doubt had both a head for business and a giving heart! ■

## “Life After Oneida”



*The class of 1960 (above) celebrated their fiftieth anniversary at the 2010 Homecoming. For this issue of the Alumni News, those attending were asked to write their “Life After Oneida” stories.*

### Frank A. Burns

Born and raised on Bullsken, Frank (“Stormy”) attended OBI all four years of high school as well as three years of elementary school. The summer after graduation, **President D.C. Sparks** helped him get a job working on the building of the new girls’ dorm.

Frank attended Cumberland College, earning his BS degree in August 1963. After teaching one year at OBI, Frank moved to Leesburg, Florida where he worked 30 years in education as a teacher, coach, and guidance counselor. He married **Diane De-Gaetano**, also a teacher; they have two children, **Michelle** and **Michael**.

Some of Frank’s OBI memories are working with **Dannie White**, **Carl White**, and sponsor, **Ed Boden**, on the yearbook staff; participating in drama with director, **Martha Bain**; singing lead and playing guitar with **Delores Gjedde** singing harmony in an operetta, “Down in the Valley,” directed by **Mrs. Randall Hughes**; and raising money for his senior trip with class sponsor, **Ferne Williford** by selling programs at the 49th District Basketball Tournament, impersonating Elvis Presley in a minstrel show and sponsoring the Flatt & Scruggs concert.

### Rodney Byrd

Rodney came to Oneida from Orlando, Florida. One of his memories was hitch-hiking to Nashville, Tennessee with **George Lannom** without permission for a fun-filled weekend. When they returned to Oneida **Mr. Hughes**, dean of boys, awarded them

six Saturdays on the farm--not so much fun.

After graduation, Rodney attended trade school in Orlando, becoming a printer specializing in typesetting. He married **Audrey Smith** from Douglas, Georgia and worked for several years at small newspapers and print shops in south Georgia and Florida. In 1969 they moved to Virginia and Rodney worked for the U.S. Government Printing Office until he retired in 1999. Rodney and Audrey have two sons and two grandchildren.

Rodney wrote, “Oneida is a great school for helping young people with family issues or other problems. I’m just such a person who might have drifted down the wrong road had it not been for Oneida.”

### Bonnie Riley Byrd

Bonnie was a day student from Teages, Kentucky. She began working at R.L. Polk & Co. in Cincinnati as a typist right after graduation. She was promoted to a supervisor position and worked there for nine years. In 1964 Bonnie married **Evis Byrd**. They have one daughter and one granddaughter and have lived in Independence, Kentucky for 46 years. They are active members of Florence Church of Christ, where Bonnie serves as church librarian and her husband is a deacon.

Bonnie went to work for J.C. Penny’s at the Florence Mall when her daughter started college. Bonnie wrote, “I got my first job with my typing skills I learned at Oneida (thanks to typing teacher, **Mrs. Geraldine Morgan**)

and I still use them every day on the computer in my job at Penny’s where I’ve worked for the past 24 years.”

### Arlene Davis Daugherty

Arlene came to Oneida her senior year. After graduation, she worked in a department store for two years and then at Sylvania Electric for ten years. Arlene married **Gene Daugherty** January 1, 1961; they made their home in Winchester, Kentucky. They have two daughters and six grandchildren.

Since 1983, Gene and Arlene have operated a produce market in Winchester. Before that, they had a dairy farm in Winchester, a farm in Mercer County, and a produce market in Versailles.

Arlene shared, “in 2006 Gene was diagnosed with stage 3-D colon cancer. He had surgery and was given four days to live, but God had different plans. People were praying for him all over the United States. Gene is now cancer-free. Praise God! We will be celebrating our fiftieth wedding on Jan. 1, 2011 and are planning to go on a cruise the week after Christmas with our entire family.”

### Brenda Baker Farrell

Brenda was associated with Oneida from the day she was born because her parents, Preston and Ruby Baker, worked for the school. One of her vivid memories from high school is of her English teacher, **Martha Bain**, reading Edgar Allen Poe’s poem, “The Bells,”

(Stories continue on page 3)

(“Life After Oneida” continued)

to the class.

After graduation, Brenda went to the Louisville General Hospital School of Nursing. In 1964 she received her RN degree and married **Dr. William F. Farrell**. They lived in Pensacola, Florida; Palos Verdes, California; and Owensboro, Kentucky. When her husband died in 1987, Brenda moved to Louisville, Kentucky. She has two sons and six grandchildren.

Brenda wrote, “Oneida does the best work in providing for students who live on campus-- not only providing an education but a sense of family. Living, learning, and working together builds a foundation for living a meaningful life.”

### Bill Hensley

Bill was a local student who attended OBI all 12 years. After graduation, Bill attended Eastern Kentucky University, worked for the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and served in the U.S. Air Force.

Bill married **Doris Ann Sewell** on June 10, 1967. They have a son and daughter and two grandchildren.

From 1975 until the present, Bill has worked for the East Kentucky Power Cooperative—first in Somerset (11 years) and then in Maysville, where he and his family live.

Bill’s memories of OBI include knowing all his classmates and playing sports.

### Judy Hamilton Hensley

Judy came to Oneida when her dad, **Eugene Hamilton**, came to serve as pastor of the Oneida Baptist Church. She attended Cumberland College for one year and then married **George Irvin Hensley**, also an Oneida graduate, on April 15, 1961.

Judy worked in the medical field and was the wife of a music minister. Besides living in Oneida, Judy and George lived in Corbin, Kentucky; Danville, Virginia; Oneida, Tennessee; Alexandria, Kentucky; and Knoxville, Tennessee. George died in 2007.

Judy has three children and eight grandchildren. Her most vivid memory

of Oneida is having Bible class under **Melvin Davidson**, an awesome man of God.

### Ruth Gay Howard

Ruth was a day student at Oneida. After graduation she attended Sue Bennett College and Eastern Kentucky University. Ruth taught for two years in Leslie County and then moved to Ohio and taught seven years in Warren County. She married **Homer E. Howard** in 1966. They have two daughters and three grandsons. After her daughters were born, Ruth stayed home to be a full-time mom. Ruth and Homer currently live in Maineville, Ohio.

One of Ruth’s Oneida memories is going to senior sponsor **Ferne Williford**’s home to make pumpkin pies, which were sold to raise money for her senior trip.

Ruth shared that Oneida taught her Christian values and demonstrated in all phases of life the value of hard work.

### Shirley Hensley Reed

Shirley was a local student, but lived in the dorm because there were no school buses then. After graduation she married **Stanley Reed**, who graduated from OBI the year before. Shirley and Stanley live in London, Kentucky and have owned a coal tipple for 50 years. They have four children, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Shirley enjoyed living in the dorm and making close friends with many of the girls. She said, “I’ll never forget **Ferne Williford** and **Mai Mai** and **Papa Sparks**.”

“Oneida helped to make me who I am today,” Shirley wrote. “We had wonderful Christian teachers and I learned how to live on my own.”

### Opal Burns Robbins

Opal was a local student who chose to live in the dorm. Like all dorm students, she was assigned a job. Actually, there was an established job rotation—you did one job for a week and then moved on to a different job.

Opal recalls that her least favorite job was peeling cold potatoes at 5:30 in the morning.

**Mai Mai Sparks**, wife of the president, had very high standards for the girls. Opal remembers that once Mai Mai tried to wipe makeup from her face when she didn’t have any on.

What about her good memories? Opal wrote, “I have so many good memories I can’t pick just one. I love Oneida—it’s home. It helped me in so many ways.”

Currently, Opal lives in Carrolton, Kentucky. She has one daughter, two granddaughters, and two great-granddaughters.

### Ronald Wagers

Ronald came to Oneida from Creekville, KY. Other members of his family and extended family had attended Oneida. After graduation, Ronald joined the U.S. Army.

When he was discharged, Ronald moved to Indianapolis, Indiana where he met and married his wife, **Shelia**. They have a son, a daughter, and one grandchild.

Ronald worked for RCA and then Olin Brass Corporation for 30 years. He currently lives in London, Kentucky.

Ronald shared, “I learned good work ethics at Oneida working on the farm. I was on the milking crew and didn’t mind getting up early because our cook, **Bertha Johnson**, always had hot biscuits, gravy, and eggs fixed for us before we walked to the farm.” ■

### Want to contact us?

Phone: (606) 847-4111

To schedule a tour: ext. 248

Fax: (606) 847-4496

Web: [www.oneidaschool.org](http://www.oneidaschool.org)

Alumni Director, Myrtle Cooke  
Phone & voice mail: ext. 268  
[myrtlewebbcooke@yahoo.com](mailto:myrtlewebbcooke@yahoo.com)



ONEIDA BAPTIST INSTITUTE  
PO BOX 67  
ONEIDA KENTUCKY 40972-0067

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Dear Friends,

This is the first time I have had the opportunity to thank all of you who made the effort to come to Homecoming this past year. My class (1960) was the 50-year class, so it was a special Homecoming for me and my 18 classmates who attended. Many had not been back since graduation. We all had a blast seeing each other again and were especially delighted that our senior sponsor, **Ferne Williford**, could be with us. I hope you will enjoy reading about their Oneida experiences in this issue of the *Alumni News*.

If you were here for Homecoming, you got to see the progress we are making on the renovation of Anderson Hall. Most of the work is being done by volunteers under the supervision of Dan Nichols ('94). We especially appreciated **Liz Baker Couch**, former OBI student 1953-54, encouraging alumni to help financially with the renovation. Liz collected almost \$2,000 during Homecoming, which was put in a fund designated for Anderson Hall. As of December 2, that fund amounts to \$3,387. If you would like to contribute, you may send any amount to the school and designate it for Anderson Hall Renovation. Any amount will be appreciated. We are hoping to have the renovation completed by Homecoming 2012.

This year at Homecoming 2011 on June 25, we will be unveiling the portrait of **Martha Coldiron Hogg**, who gave the land for our school. The class of 1961 will be celebrating their 50th anniversary, and of course the annual Hymn Sing will be at the church in the morning.

May God bless you in this new year of 2011.

Sincerely,  
Myrtle Webb Cooke ('60)  
OBI Alumni Director

### In Memoriam 2010

- Norma Morris Mahaffey ('34)
- Betty Mobley Hensley ('38)
- Taylor Burns ('40)
- June Smith Stewart ('43)
- Betty Chow Long ('50)
- Wanda Smith Sawyer ('53)
- Ruby Bryant Johnson ('54)
- Myrtle Davidson Emerson ('59)
- Laney Reid ('59)
- Rebecca Tabony ('80)
- James Kash Webb ('83)
- Jon Ratliff ('84)
- Daniel Marcum ('97)
- Heather Gay Miller ('98)
- Adna Abner, former staff
- Helen Boden, former staff
- Mary Gregory, former staff
- Joy Hawkins, former staff
- Ann Haywod, former staff
- Michael Spencer, OBI Campus Minister

### Homecoming 2011

The following classes will have special reunions at Homecoming on June 25. Individual class letters will be going out soon.

- 1941.....70 years
- 1946.....65 years
- 1951.....60 years
- 1956.....55 years
- 1961.....50 years
- 1966.....45 years
- 1971.....40 years
- 1976.....35 years
- 1981.....30 years
- 1986.....25 years
- 1991.....20 years
- 1996.....15 years
- 2001.....10 years
- 2006.....5 years

### ALUMNI NOTES

**Dean Hornsby** ('55) e-mailed **Dr. Underwood** ('63) April 23, 2010:

"I graduated in the class of 1955; my experiences at Oneida were wonderful...**Preston Baker** encouraged my father to let me come to Oneida in the eighth grade. I traveled with the varsity basketball team that year as well as my high school years...**Melvin Davidson**, my Bible teacher, had a wonderful impact on my life. The greatest day of my life was when I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior.

"I've spent 40 years in teaching and supervision at the elementary school level. I really loved being with youngsters and teaching them not only the subject material, but also the right type of lifestyle...

"I know that wonderful things are happening there [at OBI] and lives are being changed."